1. (Amended) A method for the determination of carbohydrate-free transferrin in a body fluid for use in the assessment of elevated alcohol consumption, said method comprising

(a) contacting a sample of said body fluid with a carbohydrate-binding ligand, to bind any carbohydrate or carbohydrate-containing moieties in said sample to said ligand;

(b) separating a carbohydrate-free transferrin containing fraction not binding to said ligand and contacting the separated fraction with an anti-transferrin antibody or an anti-transferrin antibody fragment; and

(c) determining the content of carbohydrate-free transferrin in said fraction and thereby determining the content of carbohydrate-free transferrin in said sample.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sample is blood or obtained from blood.

3. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the carbohydrate-binding ligand is selected from the group consisting of antibodies, [or] antibody fragments [thereof], lectins, [and] mammalian [or] carbohydrate-binding proteins, microbial carbohydrate-binding proteins, and mixtures thereof.

4. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein in step (a) a panel of more than one type of lectin is used as a carbohydrate binding ligand.

5. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the carbohydrate-binding ligand is selected from the group consisting of *Sambucus nigra* lectin, *Sambucus sielbodiana* lectin, wheatgerm agglutinin, *Maackia amurensis* lectin, *E. coli* K99 lectin, *Helicobacter pylori* lectin, *Ricinus communis* lectin, [and] *Crotalaria junctae* lectin, [and] anti-sialic acid antibodies, and mixtures thereof.

6. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separation step (b) is by precipitation, centrifugation, filtration or chromatographic methods.

7. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the carbohydrate-binding ligand is immobilized.

8. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein an ion exchange step to remove or deplete carbohydrate-carrying transferrins in the sample is performed prior to step (a).

9. (Amended) [A] The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein [the determination of] determining the transferrin content in step (c) is achieved by turbidometric or nephelometric means.

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10. (Amended) A kit for use in a method as defined in claim 1, said kit comprising:

one or more carbohydrate-binding ligands;

means for separating unbound carbohydrate-free transferrin from ligand-bound carbohydrate-containing transferrin; and

means for [the detection of transferrin] determining the carbohydrate-free transferrin content in the separated portion which determines the content of carbohydrate-free transferrin in the sample.

11. (Amended) [A] The kit as claimed in claim 10, wherein said means for [detection of transferrin comprise] determining the carbohydrate-free transferrin content comprises an anti-transferrin antibody or an anti-transferrin antibody fragment; and [preferably,] optionally an opacification enhancer.

12. (Amended) [A] The kit as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a carbohydrate-free transferrin solution of known concentration or a set of such solutions having a range of carbohydrate-free transferrin concentrations.

Please add the following new claims 13-17.

13. (New) A method for the detecting carbohydrate-free transferrin in a body fluid for use as an indicator of alcohol abuse, said method comprising

(a) contacting a sample of said body fluid with an immobilized carbohydrate-binding ligand to bind any carbohydrate-containing moieties in the sample to the immobilized ligand;

(b) separating any unbound carbohydrate-free transferrin from any bound carbohydrate-containing moieties;

(c) contacting any separated carbohydrate-free transferrin with an anti-transferrin antibody or an anti-transferrin antibody fragment to form a conjugate; and

(d) detecting the presence of any carbohydrate-free transferrin anti-transferrin antibody conjugate by tubidometry or nephalometry.

14. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the presence of any carbohydrate-free transferrin is indicative of alcohol abuse.

15. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the method is free from the influence of amino acid sequence polymorphism in the polypeptide backbone of an abuser's transferrin.

16. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the method is independent of the abuser's race.

17. (New) A kit for use in a method of claim 13, the kit comprising:

one or more carbohydrate-binding ligands;

means for separating unbound carbohydrate-free transferrin from bound carbohydrate-containing transferrin; and